



## **Student Protection Policy and Procedures**

Scotch College values the uniqueness of each individual. The College community is committed to educating the whole person, recognising the importance of the student's self-esteem and aiming to nurture, guide and challenge individual learners to reach their full potential.

At Scotch College we believe that students and staff have the right to live, learn and work in a safe and positive environment. In this environment, all interpersonal interactions involve mutual respect, and diversity of gender, race, religion, ability and culture is valued.

All members of the College Community share a responsibility to promote this ethos through polite, considerate behaviour and the use of open communication. Our Code of Ethics states that we have a responsibility to:

- Create respectful and trusting relationships with students
- Protect and advocate for the moral, physical, social and emotional well-being of students
- Respect our positions of influence and trust, and understand the significant contribution our ethical behaviour has on young people.

The scope of this Policy aims to ensure that relationships between students and adults are appropriate and the strategies that are used are preventative and educative as well as responsive to issues of student protection.

### **Procedures**

To ensure that students are protected the following documents and strategies are used at Scotch College:

#### *Relevant Documents*

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice (Families SA; Dept for Families and Communities, November 2007)
- Child Safe Environments: Standards for Dealing with Information Obtained about the Criminal History of Employees and Volunteers who work with Children (Families SA; Dept for Families and Communities, November 2007)
- Crisis Management Policy and Procedures
- Student Engagement Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Student Management Processes
- Parent Handbook
- Privacy Policy and procedures governing the disclosure of personal information



- Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Students: Guidelines for Schools, Preschools and Out of School Hours Care (DECS, AISSA, Catholic Education)
- Screening and Criminal History Checks Policy Guidelines: A Framework for Guiding Screening Practice in Education and Care Settings and Children's Services, AISSA, Catholic Education SA)
- Transporting Students Policy

### *Staffing*

#### (1) Teaching and Non Teaching Staff

##### (Dept of Education)

- The recruitment of staff includes the following screening procedures:
  - o for teaching staff, registration checks with the Teachers' Registration Board of SA
  - o for non teaching staff, police checks every three years
- o careful referee checks
- o a probationary period with a clear induction process
- The College has developed a list of roles across the school and made determination of the level of police clearance and Child Safe Environment Training required for each role (HR document).
- Child Safe Environment training is offered by the College each year and staff are expected to access this in order to ensure their training requirements are up to date. Staff who do not access internal training are expected to source appropriate external training.

#### (2) Volunteers

- Entrusted person volunteers (e.g., engaged in working 1:1 with other people's children, overnight camps, billeting, sports coach/manager, working in resource centres, offices, canteen, on school committees/governing board) are required to undergo a criminal history check and to be aware of Mandatory Notification requirements.
- Other volunteers will be under staff supervision. The main focus for these volunteers will be their own child (e.g., assistance at Sports' Day, hearing reading, guest for one off events).
- All members of the community will be made aware of the College's position on child protection through annual distribution of the College Code of Ethics and Child Protection Policy.

#### *Other Protective Practices used by the College*

- Relationships with Head of House, Mentor or Homegroup teacher that facilitate communication and effective pastoral care
- Coordinators appointed for International and Indigenous students in order to assist with their pastoral care
- Confidential counselling services for students
- Two members of the counselling team are Child Safe Environment trainers. Provision of protective behaviours education programs in the curriculum



- Risk assessment procedures for Outdoor Education activities, camps and excursions
- Sign in and sign out procedures for all visitors
- Identifying badges or uniforms for College employees
- Internet filtering software
- After-School and Vacation care services in the Junior School and library supervision before and after school on the Torrens Park Campus

### **Reports of Abusive Behaviour Towards a Student**

Should a report of abusive behaviour towards a student be received the College will follow Mandatory Notification requirements (see Appendix A). In addition, if the report involves allegations towards a person/s at the College the procedures and guidelines detailed in the Crisis Management document will be followed.

As a mandated reporter it is a **legal requirement** of staff to contact the appropriate Child Protection Authority through the Child Abuse Report Line; CARL 131478 when any child abuse or neglect is suspected.

The College will act promptly and responsibly in dealing with any such report.

### **Key Principles guiding the response to a report**

1. The safety and care of the student is the paramount consideration.
2. Reports will be addressed promptly
3. Mandatory Notification requirements will be followed.
4. Where appropriate other external authorities will be notified e.g., SAPOL, Teachers' Registration Board. The school will cooperate fully with any investigation from these authorities
5. Risk of student safety in the future will be considered and addressed.
6. Any allegations will be addressed fairly having regard for the interests of all those involved.
7. Responses by the College will be guided by due consideration and not emotion.
8. The College has an on-going duty of care responsibility to all students, not only the student(s) covered by the allegation.
9. Details regarding alleged abuse must be kept confidential wherever possible for the sake of both the alleged victim and the alleged offender. Exceptions would be where non-disclosure of information could pose a risk to the safety of other children, or if Families SA or the police have advised that disclosure is appropriate.

## **Appendix A**

### **Mandatory Notification Procedures for Staff**

Information about reporting child abuse and neglect can be found in the booklet entitled "Child-Safe Environments: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect. Guidelines for Mandated Notifiers." This booklet can be accessed by Contacting the Director of Student Wellbeing or can be found in the Torrens Park Campus staff room (filing cabinet) and the Junior School campus staff room (teacher resource shelving).



**When making a report of child abuse or neglect:**

1. Staff/volunteers are obliged by law to notify Families SA if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work (whether paid or voluntary) or in carrying out official duties.
2. If you are unsure whether you have a suspicion on reasonable grounds to notify, it is appropriate to consult with
  - a. Director of Student Wellbeing
  - b. Head of School
  - c. College Psychologist
  - d. A social worker by calling the Child Abuse Report Line, 13 14 78 (24 hrs).

**Remember it is a legal requirement from staff as mandated reporters to contact the appropriate Child Protection Authority through the Child Abuse Report Line when any child abuse or neglect is suspected. (CARL 131 478)**

3. When making a notification it is helpful if you have the following details available
  - a. The child/young person's name, age, address
  - b. The parents' names and contact details
  - c. Your reason for suspecting abuse or neglect
  - d. Your assessment of immediate danger to the child/young person
  - e. Current whereabouts of the child/young person
4. You are not obliged to inform any other person of your notification and you are able to make the notification to Families SA anonymously. However, Families SA prefers you to identify yourself and they are required to keep this information confidential. A very small number of cases go to court and if this occurs there is a small chance you may be subpoenaed as a witness.
5. If your notification is likely to result in some action involving the College you should consider informing your Head of School or the College Principal.
6. You are not required to keep any written record of a notification made to the Child Abuse Report Line. However, there may be circumstances under which a detailed written record is prudent. For example, if you have been advised by Families SA that there is insufficient information to warrant a notification but you are still concerned about a young person, the following steps are recommended:
  1. Make a record of your consultation with Families SA and any other steps taken to support the young person. To ensure confidentiality, this record should be stored in the psychology files kept by the College Psychologist.
  2. Consult with the College Psychologist to determine whether other supports can be engaged for the young person.
7. When phoning the Child Abuse Report Line you can insist that your concerns are recorded even if you are advised that there is insufficient information to warrant a formal notification.



8. You are encouraged to seek feedback about your report and any subsequent intervention from Families SA. If the child/young person needs further support within the College consult with their Home Group Teacher/Head of House/Director of Student Wellbeing and/or the College Psychologist.
9. If you are unsatisfied with the response from Families SA then ask to speak with a supervisor.
10. The contact number for the **Child Abuse Report Line** and Yaitya Tirramangkotti (for an Aboriginal child) is : **13 14 78**.
11. If you need a private and quiet place in which to make a notification approach the Director of Student Wellbeing, your Head of School or the College Psychologist.
12. The following contact people can help you by discussing your concerns, assisting you to make the call, debriefing with you following the notification or providing support in your ongoing relationship with the family:
  1. Staff at Families SA
  2. Director of Student Wellbeing
  3. Head of School
  4. College Psychologist
  5. College Nurse